

27, *Chelden*
To the author

A SERMON

ON

AMERICAN SLAVERY; -us

DELIVERED AT

THE TOWN HOUSE,

IN BRADFORD,

ON FRIDAY EVENING, AUGUST 22d, 1856.

BY

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A SERMON.

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.—Ps. CXXXVII: 5, 6.

The United States of America! There is magic in the name; and as the sound of it rolls around the world, the heart of the nations beats with a quicker pulse, and visions of millennial glory, obedient to the enchanter's spell, pass before the amazed eyes of universal humanity groaning now for sixty centuries to be delivered from the bondage of corruption. But one other national name in all history, is in any respect comparable to this for electrical effect on the minds of men—the name of imperial Rome. As Rome was the great central life-power and arbiter of destinies of the ancient world, so is America coming to be more and more universally recognized as in the van of modern civilization, and determining the issues of modern times. As of old the eyes of kindreds and tongues and peoples were bent on Rome, so now does the standard of American progress, gleaming like a meteor in the surrounding darkness, attract, fascinate, fix, the gaze of earth's struggling millions. Does hopeless poverty or unrequited toil chill the life-blood and paralyse the energies of industry in the old world? America is the watchword—America is the just Atlantis, where labor shall not be without its reward, and where a happy home throws wide open its doors to the homeless of all the earth. Is Patriotism languishing beneath the iron rod of the conqueror, or freedom ground into the dust by the iron heel of tyranny? Sweeter than the voice of poetry, more ravishing than the strains of music, the magic of America's name falls upon the ear of despair, and the children of freedom renew their strength as eagles to fly away and be at rest in the land of the free. Does Religion find no congenial abode in the dens of European superstition and infidelity? It is to America she turns her longing eyes, where the overturnings of God Almighty's arm have prepared a place in the wilderness for the refuge of his elect.

Now I do not undertake to say that men do not exaggerate, vastly exaggerate, the value of American institutions. The great mass of the race are very prone to ignore that fundamental fact of human experience, the

loss of paradise and the absolute impossibility of any earthly return to the Eden of our original creation. They see not the fiery sword which turns every way to keep the way of the tree of life, nor the fierce Cherubims who are ever on the watch against all surprise. Most men are in pursuit of happiness, as if it were attainable in this world. Hence they almost universally rate far above their real worth the great prizes of life. Wealth seems to them a heaven—as do honors, power, fame. And hence in the case in hand there is undoubtedly to human ears a magic charm, and to human hearts a ravishment of hope in the name of America far beyond anything that facts will warrant. Still, I would have no child of the Puritans believe that Providence was not laying the foundation for a purer faith and more saintly virtue when it guided his fathers to the rock-bound coasts of New England; nor would I seek to persuade any descendant of revolutionary sires that soil saturated with the blood of patriots and freemen, is not peculiarly consecrated to good government and glorious institutions. Here, no more than anywhere else on this planet—the habitation of a fallen race—do we find the means of perfect happiness. Far from it. But we do find the means of intellectual, moral, and spiritual well-being more generally accessible in America than in any other region under heaven. If no earthly paradise throws open its portals to the favored dwellers of our land, a heavenly does. It would appear that now, as of old, a Sovereign God selects some one from among the nations to be in a peculiar manner the bearer of his ark: if so, there can be no doubt that at present we are that favored people. In what other portion of the globe can be found so many temples dedicated to the true God and Jesus Christ, his Son? What people in the whole world are so generally, and as a people, so well educated as our people? Under what other government are men left so much at liberty to exercise their rights and pursue the great ends of human existence? All hail, then, to my native land! With all thy defects, I love thee still, and prize thee! Let the eyes of the world be still amazed at thy brightening splendors! Let the heart of the downtrodden and the oppressed, the poor and the persecuted, beat with even quicker pulse at the mention of thy hallowed name! As a Christian, an ambassador of the Most High God, and preacher of the everlasting Gospel, I feel it to be my imperative duty to do what in me lies, however little, for the preservation, the improvement, the purification of my country; and to demand in the name of God that the Church of Christ do the same! “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.” He who lays violent hands upon Jerusalem, lays violent hands upon the temple. He who would undermine the liberties, corrupt the pure spirit, silence the prophets, of this American Jerusalem, this Christian Repub-

lic, which I am fully persuaded Divine Providence has called into existence for the furtherance of the Gospel and the upbuilding of Zion—he, I say, who by corrupt practices, corrupt laws, and the fostering of corrupt institutions, lays violent hands upon this palladium of the Everlasting Gospel, lays violent hands upon the Church. And he who lays violent hands upon the Church, let him be anathema maranatha!

What I have to say at present in accomplishment of my Christian duty is this:—that there is a great moral evil in the land—a stronghold of Satan, which, if we cannot immediately destroy, we can and must prevent from extending itself by so much as a hand's breadth. As we would quarantine our cities against the plague, so must we quarantine all new territory against the encroachments of this blighting curse. The evil to which I allude, the devouring curse from whose jaws I would save our land, is the evil, the curse of *Slavery*! At first a small cloud hardly as large as a man's hand—our fathers hardly discerning it amid the brightness of that glorious day which succeeded the long night of Colonial servitude and Revolutionary strife, it now blackens the whole heavens with clouds and wind, and threatens a great and terrible tempest. If it be a sin and curse, it is a growing sin and curse; a sin and curse which are exercising a more and more paralyzing and blasting influence on our country and Church. Two years of familiarity with American Slavery, have served to convince me of these facts. The reasons which have irresistably led me to this conclusion, I now proceed to suggest to the candid consideration of the Church of Christ. And I would here say that I am no mere politician, though I by no means shun the imputation of being deeply interested in politics at the present crisis. I speak mainly as a Minister of Christ ever should, from a sense of Christian duty, and in exercise of my authority as a Preacher of Righteousness to denounce, and if possible, by the grace of God, to demolish whatever opposes the victorious career of the Gospel. I have found American Slavery in the way of the Church of God, and therefore, not to be tolerated, much less cherished, by a nationality called into being by God for the especial service of the Church.

American Slavery, I say, is a sin, and therefore a curse, and therefore incompatible with a Christian Church and Christian institutions. Let *facts* speak—facts, I say, which never lie. For two years—I repeat it—in the prosecution of my calling as a Minister of Christ, have I been in the very heart of the Slave States. In one of my parishes, within the sound of a single small bell, there were five hundred slaves, and within the distance of ten miles, fifteen hundred. I state, therefore, what my own eyes have seen, my own ears heard, and my own hands handled, of this abominable thing. What I would first show is that American Slavery is a monstrous sin.

It is a sin by the confession of the slave-holders themselves ;—not publicly, indeed, but in private and unguarded conversation. There are Northern men, and even ministers, who undertake to defend the institution from the imputation of guilt. But the slave-holders themselves know better. Under the immediate and personal experience of the curse, they are compelled, as it were, to understand the thing in its essential nature ; and having some little conscience left, in spite of themselves, they feel its wickedness. I could not well preach the gospel a whole year to the same people, without, by the grace of God, producing some considerable conviction of sin. I have been told by men under such convictions, that the great reason why they should be eternally lost, and the great mass of slave-holders with them, was because they were slave-holders,—because, as if under the lash and reins of some demoniacal power, they persist in keeping slaves against the conviction of their consciences, and therefore in leaving one great and fundamental sin unrepented of. The secret, inward contempt of such men for the apologists of slavery, especially the clerical apologists, is inexpressible. I have conversed with them, I tell you, when the Holy Ghost compelled them to speak the truth—and I know whereof I affirm.

Again, Slavery is a sin, because it is necessarily and fearfully cruel. Necessarily, I say, and shall show, and by consequence it partakes of the moral character of this adjunct.

The black race is naturally an indolent race, especially under the almost tropical sun of the Southern States. Still under the institution of slavery a vast amount of hard work is done, and well done. The slave is always called from his sleep to labor before sun rise, and labors till after sun set. Great plantations of a thousand acres, or more, are kept in the finest order. The cotton market of the world is supplied by slave labor. What is it, now, that makes these naturally indolent beings such mighty operatives ? It is not money, or any kind of reward. The natural inference is that it must be force, and even so it is. The *lash*—the lash—that is the thing, the main spring of slave machinery. The task is set—the task will be done, if human sinews, quivering and laid bare by the lash, can do it. Wherever there is a fine plantation, there you may be *sure* the lash is used, and used freely—from fifty to one hundred lacerating blows on the bare back being the usual appliance. This thing I know by my own observation. I became acquainted with many planters and many plantations, and in all cases, with a single exception, I found the instruments of torture in vigorous and constant use. Sometimes, for some trivial offence even, negroes are whipped to death. A crime of this kind was perpetrated by one of my parishioners, who, nevertheless passed as well in society after as before the deed.

Such is the tone of public sentiment on the subject at the South. The laws of Virginia justify the crime in question, as also do the laws of other Slave States, and the public opinion of all the Slave States. Women are beaten most unmercifully. Never, my hearers, will female shrieks and cries for mercy which I have heard elicited by the pitiless lash cease to resound in my ears, making my very blood boil with indignation. It is a common doctrine among slave holders, that it is more economical and profitable to work slaves to death under the lash and buy new, than make any compromise with negro indolence;—a course which few hesitate to pursue on such grounds, so essentially cruel is this sum of all villainies.

Slavedrivers make every effort to conceal these enormities from strangers, especially Northerners. Hence Northerners who have visited, and even, for a time, resided at the South, have doubtless returned with the impression that torture is very uncommonly, if at all, practised. It requires a long stay, and close scrutiny, under peculiar circumstances, to discover the dark things in these habitations of cruelty. Having had every opportunity, I have fully satisfied myself that torture is the main spring of slave labor, as reward is of free. A hard-working slave of whatever age or sex is as often, or more often, whipped, and that severely, than free laborers are paid their wages.

In this connection I would say, I am aware that cruelty can sometimes be justified. The law commits no crime in imprisoning the robber, or hanging the murderer. But can cruelty be justified in this case? You say you must have your cotton clothes; therefore the slave must labor; for without slave labor little or no cotton would be forthcoming; and therefore the slave must be lashed through the world; for without the lash he will not work. Such is the terrible concatenation of fatal forces that wield the instruments of slave torture. But is there a child of Adam in this presence who could by any sophistry justify himself in lashing his poor colored brother to the very grave with his own hands for so selfish, not to say paltry an object? Man, could you thus treat your fellow man with a clear conscience? Woman, could you thus treat your sister woman? By what means, then, do you justify the slave driver in doing it for you? Besides, what right have either you or he to compel any fellow creature, unless a convicted criminal, to labor against his will, by any, even the mildest force? And this leads me to another reason for the sinfulness of slavery.

It is robbery: I hesitate not to make the statement—it is highway robbery of the worst kind—its watch word, your labor or your life. It is the worst kind of highway robbery, I say. A man has as much right to his labor as to the fruits of his labor. If it is highway robbery to take

from me my money by violence, it is highway robbery to take from me my means of earning money, by violence. The capital of the merchant is as much a thing of property as his income, and to take it from him by violence, as much an act of robbery as to take his income by violence. But the workingman's labor is his capital. This, the slaveholder compels his victim to give up, or die. For if the lash fails to extort the coveted treasure—if the slave positively refuses, as he sometimes does, to render up his most precious inalienable property, that is if he mutinies, he must die. Cases of this kind are of no rare occurrence. The worst kind of robbery this! The ordinary robber seizes upon a very small proportion of his victim's property;—the slave driver—the lurking robber, on the great highway of life—seizes upon the whole, the very source of all property, a man's own hands and the sweat of his brow.

But further :—labor is not the only thing of which the slave is robbed. He is robbed of his own person, his own flesh and blood. The slave is not his own, any more than a horse is his own, but another's, to be bought and sold like any chattel. If thus to wrest from a man the title deed of his own bone and sinew, his own brain and senses, on any grounds whatever except in case of crime, be not robbery, then there is no such offence in the category of guilt. If those sovereign states which give the sanction of law to such a palpable violation of natural and inalienable right, however lofty their pretensions, or chivalrous their bearing, be any better than dens of thieves, I have yet to learn the distinction. Was Napoleon any the less a murderer because he slew his thousands? Was he not the more so for that? Even so, is robbery any the less robbery because perpetrated by a State than when perpetrated by an individual?

But it is said, in extenuation of this enormity, that the slave is paid and well paid for the valuable property with which he is thus compelled to part. To which I answer, that the thing is robbery still, as long as the transaction is not voluntary on both sides. Even admitting the adequacy of the slave's remuneration—which I by no means do, poor food and ragged clothes being but a mean return for a life's labor and a man's own flesh and blood—but even admitting, I say, the adequacy of the slave's remuneration, the transaction is robbery still, as long as the slave is an involuntary party to it. If I am compelled by the lash, or any other forcible means, to part with my house, or lands, or anything else, I am robbed, even though I receive their full value in money. But even supposing the slave was not robbed, he would still remain most egregiously cheated, which is another and conclusive reason for the sinfulness of slavery. Not only are the proud, boastful, honorable, chivalry of the South, a nation of highway robbers—to speak plainly, they are a nation of cheats. If it be the essence of cheating so to impose on cred-

utility, weakness and ignorance as to obtain a great value in return for a small, then slavery is cheating on a stupendous scale. What is there more valuable to a man than his own person? For what amount of wealth that could be named would an intelligent freeman sell his own bone and muscles? And yet the slave is obliged to part with this invaluable property for the paltry consideration of a bare livelihood, a thing which his labor earns four times over. The plantation slave is born, lives and dies in the meanest of hovels; if clad at all, which is not always the case, is clad in rags; subsists on corn bread and salt meat, lives in poverty, dies in poverty, and that, too, in barter for his own body and life long labors. Here is cheating, to say the least, on a grand scale.

But not only is slavery in itself a gross and terrible sin, its consequences are sins of the most abominable description.

A servile race must be an ignorant race—kept in ignorance of its rights, its capacities, its high destinies as members of the human family. Education, knowledge, civilization, are incompatible with slavery.—Knowledge would reveal to the slave such glorious possibilities of freedom, wealth, power, that he would never rest till he had undertaken to realize them. Moreover, a man, even the poor African, knowingly deprived of his rights, is a most dangerous being—like the tigress deprived of her young. Knowledge, too, is power. Knowledge with the slave would be power to hatch successful conspiracies for deliverance, to devise the means of liberty, and put them into triumphant operation. The slave, therefore, must be kept in ignorance; he must be a barbarian. Hence, in all the Slave States it is made criminal to teach the slave the bare rudiments of knowledge. He must not read. Who knows what he may read? Perhaps he may make discoveries in the Word of God which would set his very soul on fire! He must not write. Who knows what he would write?—Words of magic, to arouse the slumbering bondman and kindle the flames of insurrection! The slave must not know! Those glorious faculties of intellect—the especial, distinguishing gift of God to man, which in the main make man what he is, not an animal merely, but the very image of Deity, the builder of cities, the founder of empires, a candidate for immortality, the prospective citizen of other and loftier worlds—these capacities, though as much the birthright of the slave as of Demosthenes, or Tully, or Shakspeare, must be smothered in his case at their birth; and all that he may remain a slave, a chattel, to be lashed through a miserable existence. Robbery!—The half has not been told. It is not among the least of the terrible wrongs incident to slavery, that man, in order to be enslaved, must be robbed of his *soul* as well as his body.

Slavery is a crying sin on account of its *demoralizing* effects. A chattel—a thing to be bought and sold—no will of his own—a mere machine in the hands of another ! Put yourself into the situation !—You are not your own ; neither your labor nor its fruits are your own ; you can hope for nothing on earth besides your necessary food and raiment ; you are despised as the very offscouring of all things. Your owner and master makes use of you as he does of his mules. Yesterday he bought you like a mule ; to-morrow he may sell you like a mule.

What self-respect, I ask ;—what lofty aspiration, what animating hope can ennoble the character, or actuate the purposes, of a chattel ? There is nothing to be respected ; no unattained but attainable good to which to aspire ; nothing, absolutely nothing on earth to hope for ; and the poor creature subsides, after a few vain and ever fainter struggles, into the contentment of a mere sensual existence—a human brute—the lowest, most wretched, and brutal of all brutes. For the mere beast was intended by nature to be a beast, and is happy ; yea, reaches perfection as a beast. Not so man !—the human beast is unnatural—a monster. O, the ruins !—the ruins !—upon which these eyes have rested in the land of bondage ! Under the very banner of Freedom, indeed, have I seen the drunkard, the profligate, the sensualist.—Still there were some remnants of shattered humanity left to give assurance of a man ; some hope of better things flitted across the bloated countenance, or the tongue gave utterance to some sentiment caught from the Holy of Holies. But the chattel—the brutalized victim of slavery !—I protest to you that I never look upon that utter shipwreck of manhood—that caricature of humanity—without pain inexpressible. A chattel—with nothing beyond the life of a beast to live for ; crushed trampled upon, scourged, hopeless, bought, sold, robbed with impunity of his very body and soul, the last spark of spiritual fire gone out ; nothing left but a beast ! I do not exaggerate. Slavery is demoralizing, brutalizing, robbing men of their manhood. No wonder that, having done their work so effectually, many and many a slaveholder almost persuades himself that the negro has no soul. Besides, the poor bondman has no rights, worth speaking of, guaranteed by human law. What sense, then, can he have of corresponding obligations ? None seem bound to regard his rights. How natural that he should cease to regard the rights of others. Conscience dies. The slave is singularly devoid of conscience. The distinctions between right and wrong, being entirely ignored by those into whose hands he has fallen in their treatment of him, become exceedingly indistinct in his own mind, and conscience, I repeat it, **dies** !—and, with conscience, rectitude ; and the demoralization is complete. It is to rob a man of his soul, this reducing him to a

chattel. Observe that this is not mere theory ; it is *fact*, notorious fact. I speak what I know ; not merely by theory, though this were enough to convince any reasonable person. I know these things from long and close observation.

But, again, and finally under this head, slavery is a monstrous sin, because it violates the sanctities of home. The marriage relation is only nominally regarded among slaves. It has no legal sanction or permanency. Men and women are chattels, liable at any moment to be separated by sale—a condition incompatible with marriage ties. The disastrous consequences of such a state of things may be better imagined than described.

Thus it has been shown that slavery is a sin, and a great one, by the confession of the slaveholder, by reason of its dreadful cruelty, and because it robs men of their labor, their bodies and their souls ; stultifying and demoralizing ; and last, though not least, sets at nought the marriage relation.

It is in vain to reply that the African is an inferior race, and *therefore*, rightly enslaved. Admitting that it is inferior, which we readily do, vastly inferior to the white race, is it therefore to be lashed through the world ? Is it therefore devoid of natural rights to its own labor, and the fruits of its own toil ? Is it therefore proper to crush what little intellect it has left, and reduce it to idiocy ?—to brutalize still more what is already far too brutal, and apply new and hotter irons to the already scared conscience ? Is adultery any less a sin in the inferior than in the superior races ? Are not the one as much bound as the other to the observance of God's moral laws ? The admitted inferiority of the race may and does prove its adaptation to the lower walks of life, but never, as long as the race, however inferior, is still human—never will mere inferiority, justify slavery. According to Christian ethics we are to love our neighbors as ourselves, and love them all the more, and labor more strenuously for their benefit, if they happen to be the weaker and we the stronger.

But it is said slavery is not forbidden by the Gospel. No ; not directly, and in so many words, but most emphatically, though indirectly. Does the Gospel sanction cruelty, robbery, soul-murder, adultery—then it sanctions slavery ; otherwise it condemns it.

But the great cry is that emancipation is impossible. Slavery is a matter of necessity, and therefore no sin. But is emancipation impossible ? It is *difficult* indeed. In emancipating a slave, the owner throws away some thousand or fifteen hundred dollars, which is a difficult, though by no means impossible achievement. It would be a matter of great difficulty, we confess, rightly to dispose of three and a half mil-

lion human beings who know not how to care for themselves. Still, nobody can deny that this country has a superabundance of means by which the business might be done. Now there is an *infinite* difference in morals between mere difficulty, however great, and absolute impossibility. The one absolves from all obligations—the other, not at all.—Slavery, I repeat it, is a terrible sin for which there is no conceivable excuse.

And by consequence, I come now to observe, it is a curse, as is all sin, and a curse, terrible, withering, destructive, in proportion as slavery fills up the measure of iniquity.

And now rhetorical art is in vain, nor does time suffice me adequately to express the devouring curse of this iniquity. Words, overburdened break down beneath the weight of the conception, and serve but as a poor vehicle for the ponderous thought. But were I asked to select from all the stores of language, the word or figure, which in briefest space and most emphatic signification, expresses the fact, I should at once have recourse to Him who spoke as never man spoke. It is *Hell fire*—this curse of slavery, the kindling, within the bound of time, of those flames which to all eternity shall not be quenched. I would not, however, under this head, any more than when setting forth the sinfulness of the iniquity in question, deal in figures of rhetoric. The simplest language best, though inadequately, expresses that which need only be seen and understood to produce all due effect.

Upon the curse of slavery as affecting the enslaved, I shall not particularly dwell. It is plainly evident at first sight, that if the sin of slavery be what I have set forth, its victims are ground into powder by the curse of it. Robbed of soul and body and property, kept in grossest ignorance and grossest degradation, lashed through the world as it were, with a whip of scorpions, homeless, wifeless, childless, a very beast in human shape, the slave is the very incarnation of the primeval curse. All the talk about slavery's being the means of civilizing and christ'nizing inferior races is the height of insane babblement. By the mighty hand of God, who causes even the wrath of man to praise him, and under certain exceptional circumstances, some slaves do, undoubtedly, become truly pious, and perhaps, semi-civilized. But that this consequence is to be attributed directly to the lash of the slave-driver, to the chattelizing of humanity, cannot be well pretended on any conceivable grounds of moral philosophy. And how much credit for good results is to be given to indirect and unintentional instrumentalities in the hands of God? as much, and no more, as is given to Judas in bringing about the world's redemption. Strange missionaries these—the slavedriver, the man-stealer, the dealer in human flesh! Rosewater clergymen, if I may be

permitted the expression, in their south-side views, may transform such human tigers into ministers of the cross. And so is Satan transformed into an angel of light. But as for me, I am a plain man without gloves, and when I get hold of the Devil in any shape, or under any disguise, it is my intention to let him and everybody else know it.

But it is the *enslaver*, the dominant race, whose case in this connection I would more especially consider. And here the curse has full sweep and may be considered as doing its most terrible work. For a lost white man (that is as far as this world is concerned, I do not now speak of eternity,) is, if I may so say, a greater loss than a lost negro. Although the Lord has made all races of men of one blood, he has unquestionably made some races superior to others. All history and all experience show conclusively that while the African is the lowest in the scale of humanity, the Anglo Saxon is the highest. Therefore I say the loss of the latter, is greater than the loss of the former. The curse of slavery is heavy on the *enslaved*—the negro; it is heavier on the *enslaver*, the Anglo Saxon.

Slavery barbarizes and heathenizes the enslaver as well as the enslaved, and thus the curse works.

It barbarizes the dominant race. It degrades labor. The hewers of wood and drawers of water are slaves. Hence agricultural and mechanical pursuits come to be regarded as disreputable—slavish. And hence the dominant race is left to live in indolence. The only alternative is to bow the neck of its pride—which it will not do. Most abject poverty with its train of blasting evils is of course the consequence for the non-slaveholding portion of the community, who own no slaves to earn them wealth. "White trash," "clay eaters," and other opprobrious epithets, are the designation of about four millions of human beings of the dominant race at the South. And trash indeed they are. Reading and writing are accomplishments almost wholly unknown among this class. And most who have the name of understanding these arts, have but a poor smattering of them. In fact, the means of education are beyond their reach. There are schools for the rich and good ones. But the poor must live and die without their benefit. Our common school system could not exist amongst us were not all classes of our population industrious and sufficiently wealthy to contribute their mite at least to the common cause. An idle, poverty stricken, population, like the great mass at the South, must be without schools, must live in barbarous ignorance. In Virginia 60,000 white people can neither read nor write, and in most of the other Slave States a greater proportion. Is not this barbarism? Does not slavery rob the *whites* of their souls as well as the blacks? I have been among them, I tell you, and have found them gross-

ly ignorant of the most common elements of civilization, of geography, even that of their own land, of the sciences, of economy, politics, history, trade, art, agriculture, everything. They hardly know how to live. Hunting and fishing, like the savages, seem to be their ordinary means, nor does thieving, when convenient, come amiss with many of them. Idle, poor, ignorant, savage—in a word, “white trash,” barbarians!

Nor, however well educated, polite, generous, hospitable, the better, or slaveholding classes, does slavery fail to exert over them also, in withering power, its barbarizing influence. Let any man amongst us, our noblest citizen, undertake to lash his fellow creatures through the world, and it will not be long before he becomes a savage. The elements of barbarism slumber in every human heart, nor is anything better adapted to arouse them into tiger-like fury than a plantation experience. The slaveholder is a man of imperious, tyrannical, bloodthirsty passions; violent in action even though college-bred—aye, a church-member. This, too, I know by my own observation. And not only I, but the whole country, have seen something of it of late in those Western border ruffian forays, and that disgraceful and murderous attack on one of our noblest senators. These things, as every reader of history is aware, are the barbarism of feudal ages. Still the Slave States unanimously endorse and sustain them, as also does that corrupt administration of which they hold the reins.

And not only does slavery barbarize; it heathenizes. In fact to barbarize is to heathenize. Idleness, abject poverty, ignorance, plantation manners, border ruffianism, violence, blood-thirstiness, are all elements of heathenism, as well as barbarism. Barbarism and heathenism are mutual complements of one another to a great extent, and mutually productive of one another. Still a man may be a barbarian in some degree and not a heathen. Heathenism is something over and above barbarism. It is a fearful corruption of morals. And this we find as the direct outgrowth of slavery. Slavery, making light as it does, of the marriage relation, opens the flood gate to all kinds of profligacy, and profligacy is the fruitful mother of all vices, drunkenness, revelings, murders, and such like. Accordingly we find the standard of public morality at the South, alarmingly low. The adulterer, the profligate, the drunkard, the reveller, murderer, sabbath-breaker, infidel, in slave-holding communities, is about as respectable as anybody else. Nay, some of their most respected citizens, members of congress even, are stained with all these enormities. Heathenism, gross heathenism!

Barbarism, heathenism, the greatest of all curses in themselves, and so much the greater as they never fail to issue in their counterpart tyranny and irreligion. The terms are synonymous. Barbarous govern-

ments are evermore despotisms, and heathenism by its very nature is exclusive of Christianity. And the fact is that our Slave States are rapidly tending to these dreadful issues, if not already in the main but nominally free and Christian.

Can those ignorant, barbarous millions cast an intelligent vote? And without intelligent votes, what is freedom? A name, a shadow. Demagogues have it all their own way in Slave States. And the reign of demagoguery has always been covert tyranny, and in the end, sooner or later, open tyranny. What kind of material is this, I ask, wherewith to lay the deep and strong foundation of American greatness? I tell you Slavery in its very essence is aristocratic, oligarchic, monarchical, despotic. Listen while I read to you some extracts from prominent Southern Journals, which will throw some light on this point. Says the Richmond Examiner, an oracle as it were of the slave oligarchy, and whose sentiments on this point to my own personal knowledge are the general sentiments of the slaveholders:—"The South now maintains that slavery is right, natural and necessary, and does not depend on difference of complexion. The laws of the Slave States justify the holding of white men in bondage." A leading South Carolina journal says:—"Slavery is the natural condition of the laboring man, whether white or black. The great evil of northern free society is, that it is burdened with a servile class of mechanics and laborers, unfit for self government, and yet clothed with the attributes and powers of citizens. Master and slave is a relation in society as necessary as parent and child, and the Northern States will yet introduce it. Their theory of free government is a delusion." And thus an Alabama paper:—"Free society! we sicken of the name. What is it but a conglomeration of greasy mechanics, filthy operatives, small fisted farmers, and moon-struck theorists? All the Northern, and especially the New England States, are devoid of society fitted for well-bred gentlemen. The prevailing class one meets with is mechanics struggling to be genteel, and small farmers who do their own drudgery, and yet who are hardly fit for association with a Southern gentleman's body servant. This is your free society which Northern hands are trying to extend into Kansas." The South Side Democrat, a Virginia newspaper, holds forth as follows, to its delighted and applauding audience:

"We have got to hating everything with the prefix "free," from free negroes down and up through the catalogue. Free farms, free labor, free society, free will, free thinking, free children and free schools—all belonging to the same brood of damnable isms. But the worst of all these abominations is the modern system of free schools. We abominate the system because the schools are free." The South, I repeat it, is

drifting rapidly towards an open despotism—a despotism already visible not only in the tone of public sentiment, but in fugitive slave laws, thrust upon us against our will, Nebraska bills, border-ruffanism and Kansas usurpation ;—not to speak of that abominable executive tyranny, which, I trust, the free and Christian North, rising in its giant might, is about to drag down into the dust and trample in the mire.

Nor can Christianity flourish much better under such auspices than the State. I have found in my ministerial experience at the South that slavery is a sin of which men positively will not repent. Now the curse of a single unrepented sin, according to the holy doctrine which we preach, is enough to prevent men from becoming Christians and to drag them down to ruin. The wild-fire of what Southerners call revivals will, indeed, ever and anon sweep through whole towns and communities ; but as a general thing, like prairie-fires, only to blast and destroy. There is a vast difference between mere animal excitement and true religious conversions, the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, although the counterfeit may sometimes deceive the very elect. Of the former there may be abundance with little or none of the latter. And the former, viz. animal excitement, is all, I apprehend, that can in the main result from the means, appliances and material of religion, as with some few and marked exceptions, they can be found at the South. The great majority of their preachers are men grossly ignorant not merely of literature—which in some cases is pardonable—but of theology—which is absolutely unpardonable in those who set themselves up as teachers of religion. Their pulpit effusions, ungrammatical, incoherent, planless, purposeless, remind one too much of a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, but signifying nothing---while what little doctrine they do preach is confused, unintelligible, and in its combinations, unscriptural. Many of these preachers are slaveholders and fierce advocates of this sum of all villainies. I have not overstated the matter. The tree may be known by its fruits. And the fruits of this fanaticism are very apples of Sodom. The lash of the convert falls none the less heavily on the poor slave, nor is he any more reluctant in robbing his wretched victim. His eye glares none the less fiercely in paroxysms of wrath, nor in many instances (most monstrous inconsistency) does the profane oath flow any the less glibly from his tongue. An elder in one of my own churches was of this very description; and yet I was unable to procure his deposition. People did not seem to see anything in him out the way. Still some do see. And thus, as well as by reason of the hardening, blinding influence of slavery in general, religion is frequently in total disrepute among more sensible people. Vast multitudes of the better classes in the Slave States are infidels, deists, atheists. And the consequence

has its reflex action upon its cause. Unstayed by the mighty hand of Christianity, immorality in its worst forms of Sabbath breaking, profligacy, drunkenness, revelings, and such like, is rapidly converting the whole South into a very Sodom and Gomorrah; religion in disrepute; the heart hardened by vice and cruelty; the conscience seared as with a hot iron.

And so the curse works and must work. The eternal laws of rectitude cannot be broken with impunity, any more by nations than by individuals. The same Almighty Arm which created an animalcule, peopled immensity. The same irresistible power which destroys an insect, extinguishes suns and sends down worlds into ruin. And the same sceptre of everlasting righteousness which shapes the destinies of each one of us, in our individual insignificance, for weal or for woe, according as we obey or disobey its august behests, shapes the destinies of mightiest empires. America, beware! The same Stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which has already smitten to atoms the gold, the silver, the brass, the iron, of mightiest monarchs, may yet smite thee; and upon thy firmament, in letters of fire, to strike terror into the hearts of all coming generations, the finger of the avenger may yet come forth and write thy doom. "Ichabod"---thy glory is departed. Thy fertile fields may yet be swept with the desolating blasts of Sahara; and thy cities, like Babylon of old, the glory of kingdoms, become as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. America, thou art mighty; thy fleets sweep every sea; thy name is great among the nations; the very watchword of liberty, civilization, and religion, through the world---chosen art thou from all kindred, people and tongues to bear up the ark of the lord. But there is One mightier than thou. America, in the name of God, I tell thee, beware! The question is, and upon its practical solution depends thy destiny---the question is:---shall this sum of all abominations, slavery, this sin of sins, be permitted to contaminate thy yet virgin territory? Shall it any longer exert a controlling influence in the councils of the nation? Shall this relentless Moloch stretch forth its accursed arms far into the land of freedom and drag back its fleeing, struggling, shrieking victim, to a more galling bondage and more crushing tyranny? Shall slavery be any longer fortified by thy sanction? Shall it---shall it? Then I deliver thee over to that dreadful curse of slavery which I have just portrayed. Then the church of the living Christ pronounces the anathema! and in the face of this anathema flourish if thou canst!

But may we not hope better things? Is the blood then really corrupt in our veins, which beat in the hearts of our sires, those champions of human right, who sacrificed property, yea, life itself, rather than that

the palladium of liberty should be violated by tyrants' hands? Is not Plymouth Rock in our very midst? Is the spirit of the Pilgrims extinct, who left home, and ease, and plenty, and faced the perils of a waste and howling wilderness, rather than that the pure flower of religion should go out, extinguished by the smothering gasses of wickedness in high places? Shall the mean considerations of worldly thrift lead us to compromise our soul's eternal welfare, the purity of the church, the liberties of the nation? Then are we bastards, and not sons! Bastards! The pilgrim fathers! —the revolutionary heroes, Washington, I know—Adams, Jefferson—how them all; but who are ye, ye locusts from the bottomless pit, sting the body politic to madness, and blocking up Messiah's chariot wheels. Who are ye, with your hands red in the gore of lacerated humanity, with your hearts hardened to the groans of enslaved millions, handing over, year by year, with your accursed enactments, fresh victories to the Moloch of despotism, stretching the red hot hand of tyranny's most damnable law to the remotest corner of freedom's heritage; turning a deaf ear to the agonizing cries for help which come up to you from disfranchised freemen, determined with all the bold audacity of successful crime to perpetrate that despotic policy which, if persisted in, will hand down this nation a byword and a hissing to all coming time; and last though not least, unauthorized, breaking open the sanctuary of God and polluting it with your abominable conclave* and insanely, impiously, attempting by your foolish threats to seal the lips which God's own seraphim have touched with coals from the very altar, lest haply they might expose and confound your Satanic conspiracy against the liberties of the Church and State! Who---who are ye? Is it so, that we really have a race of bastards in our midst, and throughout the land, breathing New England air, nevertheless ready to sell their glorious heritage for a mess of pottage? God of our fathers forbid! I have faith to believe, though I may be too sanguine in my expectations, that multitudes make their covenant with hell through sheer ignorance, not because they love it; that it will require but a few more despotic enactments, a few more acts of executive tyranny, a few more attempted assassinations of freedom's champions, to tear the scales from every eye, and unseal every ear, and give a voice to every tongue, so that the anathema of the Church against all tyranny and oppression, issuing from the lips of God's ambassadors, as it does this night, shall be caught up by the nation, and be hurled in the mighty thunderings of a nation's resistless wrath against the powers of hell which now hold the reins of this government.

*As was done in Bradford.